27 April 2021

In response to hearings at the Joint Standing Committee inquiry into independent assessments on Tuesday 27 April, the NDIA would like to reassure and provide more information to participants, their families and carers.

Comments around the safety of participants are unfounded and could cause unwarranted concern amongst Australians with disability and their families.

The Agency wants to reassure the community that the safety and welfare of all participants is our priority, as is ensuring their continued access to the disability-related supports they need.

In respect to comments regarding back-up power generators, there are many service systems that have responsibility to support people with a disability.

Energy services, including emergency supply are the responsibility of states and territories, and electricity suppliers, and is not something the NDIS has the responsibility to fund.

To say anything otherwise is wrong.

Free independent assessments are one element of a program of improvements that will create a fairer and simpler NDIS.

They are being introduced as a way of ensuring all eligible Australians with disability are supported to apply for the NDIS. They will be fairer and more consistent, and result in participants having more flexibility in their plan budgets to choose the supports they need to live their lives.

Independent assessments will also help reduce inequity in funding and ensure all eligible Australians with disability, irrespective of their individual circumstances, can apply for and use the NDIS.

Like any budget, we have a responsibility to make sure that growth is affordable over the long-term so the Scheme is available for current and new participants well into the future.

This is not about stopping growth – both the number of participants and the Scheme's overall budget will continue to grow. In March alone, the Scheme paid for $2.2 billion worth of supports, $640 million more than the same time last year.

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